

IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES- B

A. INTRODUCTION

(See Conservation and Natural Resources- A)

B. DEFINING NEWTOWN'S NATURAL RESOURCES

(See Conservation and Natural Resources- A)

C. CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

(See Conservation and Natural Resources- A)

ISSUE #1: NEWTOWN'S WETLANDS AND WATER COURSES

1. Wetlands function as water storage areas, natural water purification systems, ground water recharge areas and natural habitat areas.
2. Vernal pools are intermittent watercourses with wildlife and plant life indigenous to this habitat.

Goal: Continue to preserve and protect Inland Wetlands and Watercourses from potential sources of contamination or development.



Action Agenda **Newtown's Wetlands and Watercourses**

Recommended Actions	Responsible Entity	On-Going	Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (4-6 years)	Long-Term (7-10 years)	Required Resources	Status *
Action: Maintain a regulatory policy of no net loss of wetlands.	CC	✦				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Provide increased protection of wetlands and watercourses by evaluating actions such as: the implementation of a "3 zone buffer system;" increasing the current requirement for regulatory review of development activities from the current 100-foot distance from wetlands to 500 feet; and, requiring that regulated wetlands be incorporated into protected open space.	CC		✦			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action: Require development applications to identify and protect vernal pools as regulated wetlands.	CC		✳			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Improve the enforcement of wetland, soil erosion and sedimentation control regulations by encouraging the adoption of penalties for violation.	CC/BOS/LC		✳			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Where feasible, create a network of buffers and greenways along watercourses to permit resource protection and public access.	PZC/CC	✳				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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ISSUE #2: SURFACE WATER AND GROUND WATER RESOURCES

1. The protection of the quality of Newtown's water resources has been identified by Newtown residents as paramount to the goal of protecting Newtown's natural resources.
2. Stratified drift aquifers within Newtown represent important existing and potential sources of drinking water.
3. Portions of Newtown's surface water resources do not meet DEP's targeted water quality classification.
4. Stream corridors filter pollutants, while providing riverine habitat and travel corridors for wildlife.













Goal: Achieve and protect high water quality classifications throughout Newtown.

Action Agenda **Surface Water and Ground Water Resources**

PRIORITY

Recommended Actions	Responsible Entity	On-Going	Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (4-6 years)	Long-Term (7-10 years)	Required Resources	Status *
Action: Adopt the CT DEP's suggested Water Quality Classifications for Newtown's water resources.	BOS/LC		✳			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action: Actively pursue the research and mapping of the Pootatuck Aquifer.	BOS					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Consider expanding the protection of the Pootatuck Aquifer recharge area.	PZC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Support improved pollution-discharge standards.	BOS/LC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Create additional aquifer-protection areas in Newtown to protect drinking water quality for future use.	PZC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Consider expanding Newtown's aquifer protection regulations to include the Pond Brook, Aspetuck and Halfway Rivers.	PZC/CC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Continue to protect existing and potential water supply aquifers from land uses that pose a risk to the maintenance of high water quality.	PZC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Continue to strengthen storm water management practices that minimize the use of impervious surfaces and require on-site infiltration to control water run-off and maintain water quality.	CC/PZC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Implement the best available techniques and technologies for storm water management.	CC/PZC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Require that all development preserve the pre-development hydrology of the site.	CC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Evaluate river protection overlay districts to: protect life, public safety and property; protect and improve water quality by filtering pollutants and sediments; stabilize stream banks and river beds; improve aquatic habitat; and provide travel corridors for wildlife.	CC/PZC					Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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ISSUE #3: FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

1. Flood hazard areas and floodways are vital elements of the natural storm water management systems in Newtown.
2. Development within flood hazard areas could result in the loss of life and property.
3. Municipal land use policies and regulations can affect the ability of flood plains to effectively and safely accommodate and discharge storm water;

Goal: Regulate development and storm water management activities within flood hazard areas to protect life and property and to preserve the natural storm retention functions of the watershed.

Action Agenda **Newtown's Flood Hazard Areas**

Recommended Actions	Responsible Entity	PRIORITY				Required Resources	Status *
		On-Going	Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (4-6 years)	Long-Term (7-10 years)		
Action: Continue to strengthen municipal regulation of the flood hazard areas identified by the Federal Emergency Management Administration to protect life and property and to maintain effective natural storm water management systems.	CC/PZC	★				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Maintain flood hazard controls that will assure continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Program and Community Rating System.	CC/PZC/BOS/LC	★				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Maintain an updated Town-wide watershed management plan for storm water management.	CC	★				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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ISSUE #4: NEWTOWN'S FARMLAND

1. Prime agricultural land is an important natural resource for the local production of food.
2. Lands in agricultural use contribute to the scenic character of Newtown's landscape and provide a link to the Town's agricultural past.
3. Un-protected prime agricultural land will remain under economic pressures for conversion to residential and other non-agricultural uses.

Goal: Protect prime agricultural land resources and promote agricultural uses.



Action Agenda **Newtown's Farmland**

PRIORITY

Recommended Actions	Responsible Entity	On-Going	Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (4-6 years)	Long-Term (7-10 years)	Required Resources	Status *
Action: Develop a Town policy and adopt incentives that encourages the preservation of farmland.	CC/EDC/BOS/LC		✳			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Utilize "Newtown's Conservation and Agricultural Zone" as a means of preserving agricultural businesses, equestrian activities and prime agricultural land resources.	CC/PZC	✳				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Evaluate off-site impacts of new development on adjacent farmland.	CC/PZC	✳				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Implement an "Agricultural Buffer Zone."	PZC		✳			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Develop land-use policies and regulations that conserve prime agricultural land resources.	CC/PZC	✳				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Work with agricultural businesses and land owners to conserve land used for agricultural purposes through the use of conservation easements; the purchase of development rights, open-space acquisitions; purchase-lease back agreements designed to sustain agricultural uses; and utilization of the "490" reduced tax assessment program.	CC/BOS/LC		✳			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Encourage the development of farmers markets and other types of agricultural businesses.	EDC	✳				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Assist agricultural businesses to create practical means of protecting farmland from wildlife.	CC/EDC/BOS/LC	✳				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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ISSUE #5: NEWTOWN'S INDIGENOUS WILDLIFE AND PLANT LIFE NATURAL RESOURCES.

1. Newtown's varied topography, forested tracts, abundant watercourses, ponds, lakes and wetlands provide habitat that supports a variety of plants and animals.
2. The Connecticut Department of Protection has identified sites in Newtown that contain unique habitats supporting endangered, threatened or special concern species.

Goal: Conserve and protect natural systems and their functions in order to maintain indigenous wildlife and plant life.

Action Agenda

Indigenous Wildlife and Plant Life Natural Resources

Recommended Actions	Responsible Entity	PRIORITY				Required Resources	Status *
		On-Going	Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (4-6 years)	Long-Term (7-10 years)		
Action: Protect wildlife and plant life habitat areas identified as “endangered, threatened, and special concern” by the Connecticut DEP’s, Natural Diversity Database.	CC/PZC	✱				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Protect large undisturbed and contiguous blocks of land to sustain diverse wildlife habitat.	CC/PZC	✱				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Identify existing wildlife corridors and support actions that preserve habitat needed for the survival of indigenous wildlife species.	CC/PZC		✱			Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Develop a working relationship with Newtown’s several fish and game conservation organizations to support actions that preserve habitat needed for the survival of indigenous wildlife species.	CC/PZC/ BOS	✱				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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ISSUE #6: STEEP SLOPES, RIDGELINES, HILLTOPS AND SCENIC VIEWS IN NEWTOWN.

1. The character of Newtown’s natural landscape is defined in part by the presence of areas of steep slopes, prominent ridgelines and hilltops.
2. A number of vantage points in Newtown afford beautiful views of Newtown’s countryside.

Goal: Preserve and protect Newtown’s steep slopes, ridgelines and scenic views.

Action Agenda

Steep Slopes, Ridgelines, Hilltops, and Scenic Views

Recommended Actions	Responsible Entity	PRIORITY				Required Resources	Status *
		On-Going	Short-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (4-6 years)	Long-Term (7-10 years)		
Action: Support actions that will lead to the protection of slopes of 25 percent or greater. Restrict land clearance for development on hilltops and ridgelines.	PZC	✱				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Protect the scenic vistas identified in the 1998 Town report titled “The Views of Newtown.”	PZC	✱				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action: Incorporate “viewshed” analysis as a requirement of future development applications.	PZC	✱				Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

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